



NCARNG Weekly Safety Newsletter



June 12, 2015

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Beat the Heat

Are you one of those who struggle with excessive sweat during the summer? If your answer is 'yes' then you're at a risk of suffering from dehydration.



Dehydration occurs when your body loses significant amount of fluids along with essential salts and minerals. Don't take it lightly, it might even be associated with something more serious. But during summer, dehydration is quite different. It occurs mainly because you fail to recover the loss of fluids caused by profuse sweating as a result of increased external temperature. Here are some tips that can help you prevent dehydration while the heat is on:

1. Drink sufficient water: No matter how much you avoid it, you're bound to lose some amount of fluid through sweating during summer. So drinking adequate water is the first thing you need to keep in mind in order to stay away from dehydration. Some experts suggest drinking 6-8 glasses of water every day. But remember fluid requirement varies from person to person depending on factors like height, weight, physical activity and the type of region you live in.



2. Avoid diuretics: Diuretics are substances or foods that increase the production of urine, which in turn results in loss of fluids from the body. Popular diuretics include caffeine containing beverages like coffee, cola and chocolate.

3. Avoid spicy foods: Apart from giving you other health problems like acidity and heart burn, spicy food also contributes to loss of body fluids by increasing the internal body temperature. But avoiding spicy food for preventing sweating in summer is debatable. Some experts suggest it's good to have spicy food because it reduces the gap between internal and external temperature and gives a cooler feeling later on.



4. Eat food high in potassium: Dehydration doesn't mean just loss of water. Along with water, your body loses a huge amount of electrolytes which you need to replenish. You need to eat potassium-rich foods including bananas, pineapples, sweet potatoes, coconut water and mangoes.

5. Avoid excessive exertion: Some amount of physical activity is no doubt important to stay fit. But exerting yourselves during summer can be dangerous, especially if you don't keep rehydrating yourself by taking water-breaks in between.

6. Stay indoors: This is the best way to prevent dehydration. Direct exposure to the sun naturally causes you to sweat more. When you sweat more, you lose fluids from your body and become dehydrated. So, avoid going out in the afternoon when the temperature reaches its peak.

7. Wear light, loose fitting clothes: Darker shades tend to absorb more heat causing to sweat more, while tight fitting clothes prevents external cool down essential for your body to regulate temperature internally. So, choose lighter shades while going out in the sun. Wear loose fitting pants, preferably cotton.

8. Say no to cigarettes and alcohol: Cigarette smoke dries up the lining of the throat and causes the cells to become dehydrated. It also with brain signals that induce thirst, so you don't feel like drinking water. Alcohol, on the other hand, is a diuretic. It dehydrates the cells lining your throat and stomach. It also affects the liver cells and can lead to severe dehydration.

**For more information visit www.thehealthsite.com/diseases-conditions/9-tips-to-prevent-dehydration-during-summer/



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The Signs, Symptoms, and First Aid for *HEAT EXHAUSTION*



Heat exhaustion is a heat-related illness that can occur after strenuous activity in high temperatures. You may also be dehydrated.

There are two types of heat exhaustion:

- Water depletion. Signs include excessive thirst, weakness, headache, and loss of consciousness.
- Salt depletion. Signs include nausea and vomiting, frequent muscle cramps, and dizziness.

Although heat exhaustion isn't as serious as heat stroke, it isn't something to be taken lightly. Without proper intervention, heat exhaustion can progress to heat stroke, which can damage the brain and other vital organs, and even cause death.

Symptoms of Heat Exhaustion

The most common signs and symptoms of heat exhaustion include:

- Confusion
- Dark-colored urine (a sign of dehydration)
- Dizziness
- Fainting
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Muscle cramps
- Nausea
- Pale skin
- Profuse sweating
- Rapid heartbeat

Treatment for Heat Exhaustion

If you, or anyone else, has symptoms of heat exhaustion, it's essential to immediately get out of the heat and rest, preferably in an air-conditioned room. If you can't get inside, try to find the nearest cool and shady place.

Other recommended strategies include:

- Drink plenty of fluid (avoid caffeine and alcohol).
- Remove any tight or unnecessary clothing.
- Take a cool shower, bath, or sponge bath.
- Apply other cooling measures such as fans or ice towels.

If such measures fail to provide relief within 30 minutes, contact a doctor because untreated heat exhaustion can progress to heat stroke.

Risk Factors for Heat Exhaustion

Heat exhaustion is strongly related to the heat index, which is a measurement of how hot you feel when the effects of relative humidity and air temperature are combined. A relative humidity of 60% or more hampers sweat evaporation, which hinders your body's ability to cool itself.

The risk of heat-related illness dramatically increases when the heat index climbs to 90 degrees or more. So it's important -- especially during heat waves -- to pay attention to the reported heat index, and also to remember that the heat index is even higher when you are standing in full sunshine.

Preventing Heat Exhaustion

- Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing, and a wide-brimmed hat.
- Use a sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or more.
- Drink extra fluids.
- Take additional precautions when exercising or working outdoors.

**For more information visit www.webmd.com/fitness-exercise/heat-exhaustion

